

Doctoral Seminar "Transmitting Science in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance (c. 1100 – c. 1500): the Material Evidence", hosted by professor Outi Merisalo (University of Jyväskylä)

Is the success of vernacular translations proportionate to the prestige of authors or translators?

In the Middle Ages, scientific texts were almost exclusively written in Arabic, Greek or Latin (Lusignan 1989). It was common practice for medieval French scholars to learn to read and write in Latin, because their research was based on Latin texts. However, in the 13th, but mostly in the 14th century, those French scholars started translating the Latin scientific and medical texts into the vernacular language.

The corpus CHrOMed (Historical Corpus Of French MEDical texts), which we are using for our research, gathers such French medical texts from the Middle Ages from the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries (1.363.499 words) and contains both translations from Latin and a few texts directly written in French (cf. Goyens, Szeceł & Van Goethem 2017 for a complete list of all those texts). A digitalized and lemmatized version of this corpus is being developed in collaboration with the *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français* team (DMF 2015, ATILF) and will be made available to the research community.

In this paper, I will be analyzing some case studies like the *Amphorismes Ypocras* of Martin de Saint Gilles (1362-1363) and the *Livre des Problemes de Aristote*, written by Evrart de Conty (c. 1380) to show how those vernacular translations from Latin medical and scientific texts made the transmission of science possible. Were they successful and popular texts; in other words, how many manuscripts of those texts survived and how many editions of them were made in the Renaissance? Is the success of those texts proportionate to the prestige of their authors or translators? Our paper will answer these research questions.

First, I would like to start with some preliminary remarks about how the success of texts and the prestige of authors or translators can be measured. Then, I will analyze the two aforementioned translations *Amphorismes Ypocras* of Martin de Saint Gilles (1362-1363), then the *Livre des Problemes de Aristote*, written by Evrart de Conty (c. 1380), by situating their makers and explaining what they wanted to do with their works. Finally, I will give some general conclusions.

Bibliography

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Hippocrate. *Amphorismes Ypocras*. Translator and commentator: Martin de Saint-Gille (1362–1363).

Lusignan, S. (1989) 'La topique de la translatio studii et les traductions françaises de textes savants au XI^e siècle'. In : G. Contamine (ed.) *Traduction et traducteurs au Moyen Âge*, Paris : Editions du CNRS, 303-315.

(Pseudo)-Aristote. *Livre des Problemes de Aristote* ; Latin translation by Barthélemy de Messine ; Latin commentary by Pietro d'Abano *Expositio*. French translator: Evrart de Conty (c. 1380).